

URGENT



Press release
December 12, 2009

Ashraf residents must not be forcibly displaced inside Iraq

Friends of a Free Iran intergroup in the European Parliament, which consists of a large group of MEPs from various political tendencies expresses its deep concern over the looming crisis in Camp Ashraf, Northern Iraq, which has been the home for decades to around 3400 members and supporters of the PMOI/MEK or the People's Mojahedin of Iran.

Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki, under intense pressure from the oppressive mullah's regime in Tehran, has ordered the forcible displacement of these unarmed civilians from their homes on Tuesday 15th December. The Iraqi authorities intend to relocate the majority of the Ashraf residents to a desert compound in Southern Iraq, an area already virtually under the complete control of Iran and its proxy terrorist insurgents. Such a move will spell the certain death of Ashraf residents. It seems possible that senior figures from the PMOI may also be deported to Iran where they will face certain torture and death.

As we have repeatedly pointed out, the residents of Camp Ashraf were each, individually, guaranteed safe-keeping by the US military. All 3400 were collectively designated as protected persons under the 4th Geneva Convention. In April this year the European Parliament passed a tough resolution demanding full protection for the residents of Ashraf, calling on the Iraqi government to end its siege of the camp and allow humanitarian aid to its residents and rejecting any forcible displacement inside Iraq. Notwithstanding our resolution, the Iraqi government ordered an attack on Camp Ashraf in July which resulted in the death of 11 innocent residents and injuries to many hundreds. 36 of the PMOI supporters were held in illegal custody for 72 days and only released after widespread international protests and the fact that many of them were near death after a protracted hunger strike.

We cannot stand idly by and witness this human rights catastrophe which has been the subject of repeated warnings. Yesterday Amnesty International gave the gravest warning yet of the likely outcome of any attempt to move, forcibly the residents of Ashraf next week.

Therefore we urge the Secretary General of the United Nations and his Special Representative in Iraq and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to intervene to avert needless bloodshed and violence against the innocent residents of Ashraf.

Friends of a Free Iran intergroup
European Parliament
Brussels

Friends of a Free Iran intergroup in the European Parliament (FoFI)

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